

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, ranking members Kissel and Fishbein and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Alex Villamil, I am from Sandy Hook and I am a supporter of CT Against Gun Violence. I have been a common sense gun legislation supporter and I believe that HB - 6355 being discussed today falls under that category. The reason for my testimony dates back to a late night phone call from my father in August of 1992. I was living in Washington, DC at the time and I was asked my father to come back to Connecticut, my older brother had been shot to death. My brother, Carlos Villamil, owned a limousine company in Stamford and after some erratic behaviour from an employee my brother decided to let the employee go. The day after he was let go the individual showed up at my brother's office and demanded his paycheck. My brother was in between meetings so he asked the individual to come back later for his check, the person became irate, refused, and an argument ensued culminating in his former employee pulling out a gun and shooting my brother five times in the back - killing him on the spot. The ERPO law in our state was not enacted until 1999, I believe that had such a law existed in 92 when my brother was killed, it may have prevented the tragedy from occurring. The current provisions to bolster the law in HB-6355 would have made it easier for individuals who noticed erratic behavior from other individuals to bring it to the attention of the authorities and prevent such horrible events from happening. My brother's death could have been preventable, had responsible laws been enacted at the time. So much grief could have been averted. My brother was 32 years old a time time, he a wife and two young children - ages 4 and nine months. His wife lost her husband, the kids grew up without a father, I lost my older brother. Responsible legislation is a duty of our representatives to provide in a civilized society, in order to prevent such occurrences from happening. The man who shot my brother was mentally ill, perhaps someone close to him could have gone to a judge as HB - 6335 proposes, taken the gun away from him and perhaps gotten the mental help that he needed. A great deal of pain could have been averted. The irreparable harm committed against my brother, our family, himself and even his own family would have been headed off by the 1999 law and the current proposed provisions in HB - 6355. I see this as a logical and preventative piece of legislation. Any concerns of due process are addressed in the bill. An ex parte process is used that is virtually the same as the one used for issuing domestic violence restraining orders and the subject is entitled to a court hearing, presided over by a Judge, before the order is extended beyond 14 days. As mentioned earlier, there is no evidence that the process is used to harass gun owners; judges are required to have clear and convincing evidence to issue final risk protection orders.

Member of the Judiciary Committee - Once the damage is done, when it comes to loss of life, there is no way to nullify the harm. Preventing the occurrence through savi and thoughtfull legislation can prevent unnecessary deaths.

I urge this committee to vote in favor of HB - 6355. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Alex Villamil  
Sandy Hook, CT.